(c) to (e) Aspartame is recognized as safe as per safety evaluation by joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives with acceptable daily intake of 0-40 mg per kg body weight.

Retirement age of Government doctors

596. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to raise the retirement age of Government doctors;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware of the exodus of medical specialists from various Government Hospitals to private hospitals;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the number of specialists doctors who have left Government hospital to join private hospitals;

(e) whether Government are contemplating special pay-package for specialists doctors; and

(f) if so, the details in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (f) The retirement age of Government doctors was raised from 58 years to 60 years in 1998. The informotion available in the Ministry does not indicate that specialists of Central Health Service are leaving to join private hospitals in significant numbers. During the last five years 5.47% of the total strength of specialists of Central Health Service have left the service. No indications have been given by such doctors about their joining private hospitals. The pay and allowances including Non Practicing Allowance of Central Health Service officers have been increased significantly as per the recommendations of the 5th Central Pay Commission.

Single Window System for clearing the new drug applications

597. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a single window system is being created for clearing the new drug applications involving recombinant technology and Genetic Engineering; and

(b) if so, by when this will become operational and what will be the requirement for such a clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Under the aegis of Ministry of Environment and Forest, a task force on recombinant pharma has been constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, DG, CSIR New Delhi, for streamlining the current regulatory framework on recombinant based therapeutic products. Final decision in this respect will be taken as and when the final recommendations of the said committee are received.

Funds for National Mission on Rural Health

598. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal from Karnataka for release of funds under National Mission on Rural Health is pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the amount would be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal in the form of Programme Implementation Plan (PIP) for Reproductive and Child Health Programme-II (RCH-II) has been received from Govt. of Karnataka.

(b) The basic objective of the proposal is to improve the Reproductive and Child Health of the population. The PIP for the year 2005-06 is for Rs. 102.60 crores.

(c) The Plan has been approved for Rs. 63.00 crores. The first instalment of Rs. 28.30 crores is being released shortly to the State Government.